

## **Question and Answers from ADE **Fall Training 10/21/03** 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center Grant Awardees**

**Q: What is the official definition of the term / label Best Practices?**

**A: I am not aware of an “official” definition. Here are two.**

- 1. This definition is from the document titled, “Outcomes and Research in Out-of-School Time Program Design, “Best Practices are carefully selected and coordinated techniques that have demonstrated direct connections to desired results.”**

**For more valuable reading on this topic and how it relates to after school programs, please go to this website:**

**[www.wellesley.edu/WCW/CRW/SAC/Outcomes.pdf](http://www.wellesley.edu/WCW/CRW/SAC/Outcomes.pdf)**

- 2. According to the Academy for Educational Development Center for Youth Development and Policy Research Practices promising practices “are the good things that underlie the activities that go on every day in after school programs that lead to positive outcomes for children and youth. They have indicators or evidence of positive results that have been determined to be contributing to the quality programming and the well being of youth, families and communities. Promising practices address many positive social, emotional, cognitive, physical and culturally-, developmentally-, age- and gender – appropriate for the population, children and youth being served.”**

**For more information, visit the National Institute of Out of School Time website at:**

**<http://www.niost.org/>**

**Q: Is there a requirement about how many students must be serviced by a school?**

**A: It is important to honor your approved 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Grant. If you specified that you would serve a specific number of students, you should aim to serve that exact number. The “average” 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC site serves about 200 students.**

**Q: What Research-Based information or Best Practices Articles suggest that classes such as Model Rocketry, Cooking, Roller Blades, Tap Dancing, will dramatically increase reading and writing scores?**

**A: To my knowledge, I am not aware of specific research on the mentioned classes. However, if enrichment class objectives and activities are aligned with AZ Standards they become “academic enrichment classes”. All AZ Standards are based on scientific research. For example, the AZ Reading Standards are based on the Report of the National Reading Panel “An Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and its implications for Reading Instruction.” In addition, according to a report on Best Practices and after school programs “Outcomes and research in Out-of-School Time Program Design”, quality programs retain students and are popular with participants. To see this full report click here: [www.wellesley.edu/WCW/CRW/SAC/Outcomes.pdf](http://www.wellesley.edu/WCW/CRW/SAC/Outcomes.pdf)**

**In order to do this, classes like Model Rocketry and Cooking might be offered in combination with core academic classes. One idea might be to have all students attend the core academic classes (such as Reading Club and Math Club) on**

**Mondays and Wednesdays and offer enticing academic enrichment classes on Tuesdays and Thursdays as part of a balanced four-day program.**

**For copies of AZ State Standards click here:**

**<http://www.ade.az.gov/standards/contentstandards.asp>**

**Q: There is a difference between academic and enrichment classes. Shouldn't we be spending federal money to its best and focus on classes in reading and writing?**

**A: It is important to review your approved grant application to see what type of classes were to be offered at your site. It is permissible to offer only core academic classes at your 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Center site. Since increased achievement in reading, writing and math are the outcomes that will be measured in your Annual Performance Report, in addition to reading and writing classes also include math classes in your program. According to the USDOE Non-Regulatory Guidance, Section G-1,**

**<http://www.ade.az.gov/21stcentury/Non-RegulatoryGuidance2-03.pdf>**

**Grantees are limited to providing activities from the following list:**

- Remedial education activities and academic enrichment leaning programs
- Mathematics and science education activities
- Arts and music education activities
- Entrepreneurial education programs
- Tutoring services
- Programs that provide after-school activities for limited English proficient students that emphasize language skills and academic achievement
- Recreational activities
- Telecommunications and technology education programs
- Expanded library service hours
- Programs that promote parental involvement and family literacy
- Programs that provide assistance to students who have been truant, suspended or expelled to allow the students to improve their academic achievement; and
- Drug and violence prevention programs, counseling programs and character education programs

**Keep in mind that retaining students as “regular attendees” (30 days or more per school year) can be challenging. For this reason, consider Research-Based Best Practices relating to Program Frameworks. These suggestions have been carefully tested, refined and replicated. One piece of advise regarding activities by the After-School Corporation (TASC):**

- A quality after school program offers activities that require critical thinking, self-direction, risk-taking, fitness, curiosity, imagination, aesthetics, expressiveness, movement and communication

**To see more frameworks and best practices on out of school time program design refer to this paper: [www.wellesley.edu/WCW/CRW/SAC/Outcomes.pdf](http://www.wellesley.edu/WCW/CRW/SAC/Outcomes.pdf)**

**Q: Can 21<sup>st</sup> Century provide programming for morning Kindergarten students in the afternoon? Can parent classes for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC be during school hours?**

**A:** In general, "...services are to be provided outside the regular school day or during periods when school is not in session, e.g. before school, after school, evenings, weekends, holidays or summer... However, activities targeting pre-kindergarten children and adult family members may take place during regular school hours, as these times may be the most suitable for serving these populations." Since a morning half-day kindergarten class will be outside the regular school day in the afternoon, programming is permissible.

**Q:** Our school uses numbers (1-4) instead of grades. How do we complete the achievement data report?

**A:** It may be necessary to consult the Arizona Department of Education Research, Standards and Accountability Department depending on if you use a concept level or standard level for reporting. Garrett Holm, Policy Analyst can be reached at 602-542-1981.

**Q:** Can the narrative portion of the grant be amended? Example 5 hours of parent involvement. If it is not working, can it be adjusted?

**A:** Before vastly changing your approved program activities, it is best to consult with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century State Project Director or Project Specialist. Regarding the example of parent involvement, if the objective was set too high to meet, in the Annual Performance Report there is an opportunity to revise your objective and change/comment on the revision.

**Q:** What suggestions can you give for "homework clubs"?

**A:** Research suggests that "well designed, reliably implemented one to one or small group intervention using trained college students and volunteers can make a significant contribution to improved reading outcomes." (Elbaum et al, 2000)

What does "well designed" mean?

- Close coordination with classroom instruction and after school teacher
- Well structured, planned sessions
- Assessment, monitoring and reinforcement of students' progress
- Well trained tutors
- Caring relationship between tutor and student
- Parental involvement

**Q:** What percentage of staff must be certified?

**A:** Please consult your approved grant application as reference for this question. If there is no mention of certified staff, it is a site decision to hire the individuals that are needed for a quality 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC program. There is no mandate requiring certified staff.

**Q:** Is it possible for a student to enroll in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Program via the Internet vs. in-person?

**A:** Please consult your district on registration policies via the Internet specifically as it relates to parent permission and required signatures.

**Q: How long should we keep documentation?**

**A: The USDOE requires 3 years. However, please check with your district policies, as some districts require 5 years.**

**Q: What kind of pay can be given per teacher / parent in charge of 15 students per class?**

**A: After school instructor pay varies. There is a range of \$8.00 per hour – \$18.29 per hour for classified staff. Use your approved grant application as reference for this question. If changes need to be made regarding rates of pay, it may be necessary to submit an amendment. Contact the 21<sup>st</sup> Century State Project Director or Project Specialist for consultation on this issue.**

**Q: Can we use the parent attendance for Parent / Teacher Conferences as part of our adult attendees requirement?**

**A: It depends. It is not permissible to use the parent attendance at parent / teacher conferences as an adult attendee requirement on its own merit. However, if the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC staff at a school would like to add /or revise an objective in the grant to include the increase of parent / teacher conference attendance, (as compared to attendance prior to 21<sup>st</sup>CCLC funding) a few steps should be taken to allow this to be permissible.**

- 1 Write an objective to include this type of parent involvement in your grant**
- 2 Determine how results will be measured**
- 3 Determine what activities will be planned to have the desired results for this objective**
- 4 Implement activities specifically intended to impact the desired results**

**Sample practices may include but are not limited to:**

- Distribution of brochures on the importance of Parent / Teacher Conferences**
- Personal reminder phone calls made to parents**
- Family Nights on topics such as, “Important questions to ask at your Parent / Teacher Conference”**
- Resource Fair held the night(s) of the Parent / Teacher Conferences**
- Home visits by teachers to replace parent / teacher conferences**

**It is not permissible to use the parent attendance at parent / teacher conferences without adding a grant objective, activities and a means of measurement to report results.**

**Q: Will the ADE website improve? It is difficult to use.**

**A: The ADE website has been changed as of this month. The 21<sup>st</sup> Century Department staff will update the 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC Page on the ADE website on a monthly basis and prior if needed. Please call the 21<sup>st</sup> Century State Project Director or Project Specialist if you have any suggestions or would like to see something posted on the website.**

**At any time, please feel free to ask specific questions and to request personalized consultation:**

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